REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-7, 9, 11, 21-25, 29, and 30 are currently pending. Claims 8 and 10 have been canceled without prejudice; and Claims 1, 11, 21, 25, 29, and 30 have been amended by the present amendment. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-22, 25, 26, 29, and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,310,692 to Fan et al. (hereinafter "the '692 patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,647,056 to Barrett et al. (hereinafter "the '056 patent"), further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,401,116 to Okigami (hereinafter "the '116 patent");[1] Claims 2 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '692, '056, and '116 patents, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,430,711 to Sekizawa (hereinafter "the '711 patent"); Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '692, '056, and '116 patents, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,601,040 to Kolls (hereinafter "the '040 patent");[2] and Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '692 patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,901,286 to Danknick et al. (hereinafter "the '286 patent").[3]

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the interview granted Applicant's representative on October 2, 2008, at which time a proposed amendment to the claims was

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[1] Applicants note that item 5 on page 3 of the outstanding Office Action lists claims that are no longer pending. Claims 12-20 and 26 are no longer pending.

[2] Applicants note that item 21 on page 10 of the outstanding Office Action also lists Claim 27 as being rejected on these grounds. However, Claim 27 was previously canceled.

[3] Applicants note that Claim 28, which is listed in the rejection in item 23 on page 11 has been previously canceled. Further, Applicants note that the rejection of Claim 24 does not include any mention of the '056 and '116 patents, which are included in the rejection of Claim 21, from which Claim 24 depends. Accordingly, it appears that not including the '056 and '116 patents in the rejection is an oversight.

discussed. At the conclusion of the interview, the Examiner indicated that the proposed amendment would likely overcome the outstanding rejection of the claims.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to a method of monitoring a monitored device communicatively coupled to an intranet network, comprising: (1) periodically obtaining, by a first monitoring computer through a firewall at a monitoring site using a first Internet protocol over a wide area network, first device information of the monitored device, the first device information including status information obtained from sensors of the device, and a device identification of the device; (2) storing, by the first monitoring computer, the obtained first device information; (3) processing the first device information and previously stored status information of the device monitored by the first monitoring computer to generate second device information that includes the first device information and the stored status information; (4) transmitting the second device information using a second Internet protocol from the first monitoring computer to a second computer located at the intranet network of the monitored device; and (5) receiving the second device information by the second computer. Further, Claim 1 clarifies that the first monitoring computer is remote from the device, and the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the first device information from the device. The changes to Claim 1 are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.[4]

Regarding the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Office Action asserts that the '692 patent discloses everything in Claim 1 with the exception of the first monitoring computer obtaining the first device information through a firewall, and processing the first device information and previously stored status information to generate second device information, and relies on the '056 and '116 patents to remedy those deficiencies.

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[4] See, e.g., Figures 1 and 5 and the discussion related thereto in the specification.

The '692 patent is directed to a printer resource management system that includes a database that stores, for a printer, at least one pair of attributes that are representative of a printer resource level and a printer resource threshold for preventive monitoring of the printer resource. Further, the '692 patent discloses that the printer resource manager receives the updated printer resource level from the printer (e.g., via SNMP), updates the level in the database, compares the resource level with the corresponding resource threshold to determine whether the corresponding printer resource level is deficient, and generates and outputs an advance notification if the printer resource level is determined to be deficient. In particular, as shown in Figure 3, the '692 patent discloses a printer 250, a server 240 having the printer resource manager 248, and a client 220. Further, as shown in the flowchart in Figure 4, the notification of the low printer resource level is dependent upon the comparison of the resource level with the threshold.

However, as admitted in the outstanding Office Action, the '692 patent fails to disclose obtaining by a first monitoring computer through a firewall a first device information, and the step of processing the first device information and previously stored status information of the device monitored by the first monitoring computer to generate second device information, as recited in Claim 1. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the '692 patent fails to disclose the limitations added to amended Claim 1. In particular, the '692 patent fails to disclose periodically obtaining, by a first monitoring computer through a firewall at a monitoring site using a first Internet protocol over a wide area network, first device information of the device, the first device information including status information obtained from sensors of the device and a device identification of the device, as recited in amended Claim 1. In particular, the '692 patent is silent regarding periodically obtaining first device information over a wide area network.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the '692 patent fails to disclose

transmitting the second device information using a second Internet protocol from the first

monitoring computer to a second computer located at the intranet network of the monitored

device, as recited in Claim 1. In this regard, Applicants note that Claim 1 requires obtaining

the first device information by a first monitoring computer over a wide area network and then

transmitting the second device information from the first monitoring computer to a second

computer located at the intranet network of the monitored device. Since the '692 patent does

not disclose transmission over a wide area network, it also fails to disclose these limitations.

The '056 patent is directed to a method for managing access to a peripheral over a

local area network with an interactive network board connectable to the peripheral via bi-

directional peripheral interface. In particular, as shown in Figure 1, the '056 patent discloses

a network interface board (NEB) 2 connected to a printer 4, and the sending of information

over a local area network to a network administrative PC 14. As noted in the outstanding

Office Action, a log file can be maintained and accessed by the PC 14.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '056 patent fails to disclose the step

of periodically obtaining, by a first monitoring computer through a firewall at a monitoring

site using a first Internet protocol over a wide area network, first device information of the

device, as recited in amended Claim 1. Rather, the '056 patent discloses a local area network

and the monitoring of a printer using a network expansion board directly connected to the

printer over a local area network. The '056 patent does not disclose any Internet email

protocols. Further, Applicants note that the Office Action appears to rely on the '056 patent

merely for the claimed processing of the first device information and previously stored status

information of the device monitored by a first monitoring computer.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the '056 patent fails to disclose

transmitting the second device information using a second Internet protocol from the first

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monitoring computer to a second computer located at the intranet network of the monitored

device, as recited in amended Claim 1. Since the '056 patent does not disclose obtaining, by

a first monitoring computer over a wide area network, the first device information, it cannot

disclose transmitting the second device information from the first monitoring computer to a

second computer located at the intranet network of the monitored device, as recited in

amended Claim 1. Further, as discussed above, the '056 patent merely discloses monitoring

on a local area network.

The '116 patent is directed to a remote trouble management system comprising a

plurality of devices connected to the Internet, and a plurality of management servers for

managing the plurality of devices individually through one of the Internet and an intranet

connected to the Internet. As shown in Figure 1, the '116 patent discloses a firewall 7

connected to a local area network on which is connected a network connected device 5.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '116 patent fails to disclose

periodically obtaining, by first monitoring computer through a firewall at a monitoring site

using a first Internet protocol over a wide area network, first device information of the

monitored device, the first device information including status information obtained from

sensors of the device and a device identification of the device, as recited in amended Claim 1.

In particular, Applicants respectfully submit that the '116 patent fails to disclose periodically

obtaining the device information. Rather, the '116 patent discloses the sending of

information only when a fault or trouble is detected. Further, the '116 patent does not

disclose obtaining the device information through a firewall at a monitoring site, as required

by Claim 1. Rather, the '116 patent discloses a firewall at the intranet of the monitored

device.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the '116 patent fails to disclose the step of

transmitting the second device information using a second Internet protocol from the first

monitoring computer to a second computer located at the intranet network of the monitored device, as recited in Claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that the '116 patent is silent regarding the sending back of the second device information from a first monitoring computer located over a wide area network to a second computer located at the intranet network of the monitored device, as required by Claim 1.

Thus, no matter how the teachings of the '692, '056, and '116 patents are combined, the combination does not teach or suggest the steps of periodically obtaining, by a first monitoring computer through a firewall at a monitoring site using a first Internet protocol over a wide area network, first device information of the monitored device; and the step of transmitting the second device information using a second Internet protocol from the first monitoring computer to a second computer located at the intranet network of the monitored device, as recited in amended Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 (and all similar rejected dependent claims) is rendered moot by the present amendment to Claim 1.

Independent Claims 11, 21, 25, 29, and 30 recite limitations analogous to the limitations recited in Claim 1. Moreover, Claims 11, 21, 25, 29, and 30 have been amended in a manner analogous to the amendment to Claim 1. Accordingly, for the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 11, 21, 25, 29, and 30 (and all associated dependent claims) are rendered moot by the present amendment to the independent claims.

Regarding the rejection of dependent Claims 2, 5, 23, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Applicants respectfully submit that the '283, '040, and '711 patents fail to remedy the deficiencies of the '692, '056, and '116 patents, as discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of dependent Claims 2, 5, 23, and 24 are rendered moot by the present amendment to Claims 1 and 21.

Regarding Claim 4, Applicants note that Claim 4 clarifies that the transmitting step

comprises transmitting the second device information to the second computer periodically

regardless of the content of the second device information. On the contrary, the '692 patent

discloses sending information when a printer resource falls below a particular threshold. The

'692 patent does not disclose transmitting information periodically regardless of the content

of the information, as required by Claim 4. In this regard, Applicants note that the Office

Action on pages 2 and 3 states that the '692 patent teaches a pulling model for providing

updates whereby the "time period for periodical updates can be varied as desired."[5] Further,

the Office Action relies on column 5, lines 1-14 in the '692 patent as disclosing this

limitation. However, Applicants note that this passage in the '692 patent relates to the

communication between the printer 250 and the server 240 as shown in Figure 3. On the

contrary, Claim 4 is directed to communication between the first monitoring computer and

the second computer, not communication between the printer and the first monitoring

computer. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 4 patentably defines over

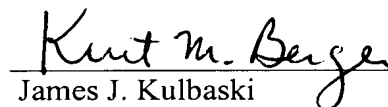any proper combination of the '692, '056, and '116 patents.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 11, 21, 25, 29, and 30

(and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over any proper combination of the

cited references.

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[5] See page 3 of the outstanding Office Action.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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